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United Nations Industrial Development Organization

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Industrial Development Board

Twenty-ninth session
Vienna, 9-11 November 2004
Item 8 of the provisional agenda

DATE, PLACE AND PREPARATION OF THE ELEVENTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

Report by the Director-General

Provide information on developments subsequent to the adoption of decision IDB.28/Dec.10.

1. Document IDB.28/11 reported on the status of consultations held with the Government of Colombia as of 7 April 2004 concerning the offer of Colombia to host the eleventh session of the General Conference at Cartagena de Indias. In accordance with decision IDB.28/Dec.10, adopted by the Board at its twenty-eighth session, the Secretariat continued consultations with the Government.

2. As agreed in a meeting with government representatives on 28 May 2004, the Secretariat elaborated the financial implications in greater detail and forwarded the information to the Government on 30 June 2004.

3. In a letter dated 25 August 2004 from the Deputy Minister for Enterprise Development, shown in the annex to the present document, the Government informed UNIDO of the withdrawal of its offer.

ACTION REQUIRED OF THE BOARD

4. The Board may wish to adopt the following draft decision:

"The Industrial Development Board decides to hold the eleventh session of the General Conference at the Austria Center Vienna from 28 November to 2 December 2005."

For reasons of economy, this document has been printed in a limited number. Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies of documents to meetings.

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Annex

Ministry of Trade, Industry and Tourism
From the Deputy Minister for Enterprise Development

Bogotá, D.C., 25 August 2004

Sir,

I have the honour to address you concerning the offer made by the Government of Colombia to host the eleventh session of the General Conference of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in the city of Cartagena.

I should like to inform you that, owing to the financial difficulties that the country is currently experiencing and the need to prioritize the necessary investments, we have reached the conclusion that we are not in a position to ensure that the Conference will be staged in an appropriate fashion. For that reason, the Government has decided to withdraw its offer. I should say, in that connection, that the reasons that led Colombia to offer to host the Conference remain valid; and we hope that, in the not too distant future, we shall be able once again to propose that the city of Cartagena should play host to a UNIDO General Conference.

The fact that the Colombian Government has had to reconsider its position on hosting the Conference does not, in any sense, imply diminution in Colombia's commitment to UNIDO. On the contrary, we recognize the important work carried out by the Organization to promote sustainable industrial development as an indispensable element in the fight against poverty and social inequality, in accordance with the goals for development established at the United Nations Millennium Summit.

I hope, Sir, that you and the members of the Organization will understand the reasons that have led our Government to take this difficult decision.

Accept, Sir, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

[*Signed*]

Carlos Alberto Zarruk Gomez
Deputy Minister for Enterprise Development

Mr. Carlos Margariños
Director-General
UNIDO
Vienna